

# Commonwealth of Massachusetts



## Comprehensive Annual Financial Report

*For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2002*

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*This document and related information are available at*



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"After eight consecutive sub-.500 seasons, including a second straight ninth-place finish in the American League in 1966, Red Sox general manager Dick O'Connell decided to place his faith in the young, brash, and confident Dick Williams, who had successfully managed his Triple-A affiliate in Toronto. After accepting the job, Williams was asked how he thought the team would do in the upcoming 1967 season. He predicted, "We'll win more than we lose."

Beating 100 to 1 odds to win the American League pennant with a team of young players and two budding superstars in Carl Yastrzemski, who won the MVP and the Triple Crown, and Jim Lonborg, who won the Cy Young Award, the team became known as the "Impossible Dream" Red Sox. Unfortunately they fell one game short of a World Series Championship, losing Game 7, 7-2, to the St. Louis Cardinals.

In a different era and a different sport, but part of the same starving-for-a-championship fan base, New England Patriots head coach Bill Belichick, off a 5-11 last-place season in the American Football Conference East division in 2000, said of his team's chances in 2001, "We'll be more competitive. We'll have more depth."

On the evening of February 3, 2002, at the Superdome in New Orleans in a suspended second or two, kicker Adam Vinatieri proceeded toward the ball with short, swift steps, driving it with the full force of his right leg, creating a perfect follow-through that sent the ball end-over-end 48 yards through the uprights and into all time. Vinatieri extended his arms in triumph.

The Patriots –the "Impossible Team" –had paid back St. Louis for an entire generation of frustrated Boston sports fans, beating the 14-point favorite St. Louis Rams in Super Bowl XXXVI, 20-17.

Hearts raced as the historic significance of the evening turned screams and cheers to tears. From the players to the coaches, from the owner to the fans watching at the Superdome, and from bars in Copley Square in Boston to the "End Zone" in Foxboro, people were watching—almost 1.3 million viewers, the most-watched program in Boston television history.

This sportswriter sat motionless in his seat in the press box at the Superdome in New Orleans, as the field area was a sky of confetti and players were leaping onto the field and into each other's arms.

Quickly, with an NFL type hovering over my shoulder, waiting for the ballot I was contemplating, I had to make the tough decision on who would be the game MVP. After all, what I had witnessed through 16 games and an equally improbable postseason was the epitome of the word team."

From *The Impossible Team*  
*The Worst to First Patriots' Super Bowl Season*  
By Nick Cafardo  
Triumph Press

Cover photography courtesy of George Martell and the Boston Herald

The Patriots coming onto the field of the Superdome after being introduced not as individual players, but at their request, as a team.

The Patriots Superbowl championship was the first in the franchise's 42-year history.